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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9524
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 3186
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6624
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ MAR QUITO 0183
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF STATE AIR WING PATRICK AFB FL
RHEHOND/DIRONDCP WASHDC
RHMFIUU/COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHINGTON DC
RULSJGA/COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-CI/G-M/G-OLE//
RUCOWCA/COMLANTAREA COGARD PORTSMOUTH VA
RUWDQAA/COMPACAREA COGARD ALAMEDA CA

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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR INL/LP
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TAGS: SNAR KCRM ASEC PREL PE
SUBJECT: MARCH 2006 MONTHLY CABLE

REF: A. LIMA 01232
1B. LIMA 00584

SUMMARY

11. (SBU) Here are the key developments in March 2006:

-- In March, CORAH eradicated 1,593 hectares of coca in the Polvora/Pizana region of the Huallaga Valley. Thirteen hectares of opium poppy were also eradicated by the Police.

-- DIRANDRO also destroyed 47 cocaine base labs and neutralized over 3,000 kg of precursor chemicals.

-- INL/DAS Christy McCampbell and INL/LP Director Tony Arias visited Peru from March 19-23.

-- The Maritime/Ports section received new ion-scanners that boost air cargo and container inspection significantly.

-- Community Anti-Drug Coalition evaluation shows strong support and participation from communities and lagging performance of some NGO coalition teams. End Summary.

ERADICATORS FINISHING UP IN POLVORA-PIZANA AREA

12. (U) As of March 28, CORAH has eradicated a total of 1,593 hectares, eliminated 3,762 square meters of seedbeds (the equivalent of 251 hectares if planted), and witnessed the destruction of 29 cocaine-base laboratories. Of the total eradicated, 249 hectares had been replanted coca. Eradication operations are slated to end in the Polvora-Pizana area at the end of March.

13. (U) NAS and CADA continue to coordinate with the UNODC in Lima on the UN coca survey. We are working with USAID to develop a cost-sharing agreement for CADA services. USAID's Alternative Development Program uses CADA to locate coca cultivation and replanting.

14. (SBU) In early April, NAS will do an aerial reconnaissance over an area 20-30 km west of Santa Lucia to look for and eradicate opium poppy fields. CADA personnel

will participate, so they can get a spectral signature of the poppies. NAS and DEA are working with DEVIDA on controlling precursor chemicals. The focus is currently on acetone, the solvent of choice for Peruvian cocaine processors. Acetone is being imported by only a few companies, so it may be one of the chemicals most easily controlled.

INL DAS MCCAMPBELL AND INL/LP ARIAS VISIT PERU

¶15. (SBU) On their March 19-23 visit to Peru, INL/DAS Christy McCampbell and INL/LP Director Tony Arias were briefed on the Mission's counter-narcotics efforts (Ref A). They met with Peruvian government officials and non-governmental interlocutors. McCampbell and Arias met with customs, police, and port officials involved in port security programs. DAS McCampbell visited a demand reduction program for at-risk youth in a barrio of Lima. Arias inspected the proposed Regional Training Center associated with ILEA.

¶16. (U) The INL visitors traveled to two of the main drug source zones--the Huallaga and the Apurimac/Ene River Valleys (VRAE)--where they inspected the NAS-sponsored police bases and academies at Santa Lucia and Mazamari. They also visited current eradication operations and a cocaine-base laboratory, where they observed the first production stage of cocaine base. The group also visited Palma Pampa to see the NAS-constructed police base in the VRAE.

POLICE: SUPPORTING ERADICATION, BUSTING COCAINE LABS

¶17. (U) The DIRANDRO Special Operations Division maintains a security perimeter for the eradication. DIRANDRO also destroyed 47 cocaine base laboratories and neutralized over 3,000 kg of precursor chemicals. On March 13, DIRANDRO eradicated 13 hectares of opium poppy in Celendin in Cajamarca.

¶18. (U) DIRANDRO personnel based in Santa Lucia destroyed 15 cocaine-base laboratories. The DIRANDRO Road Interdiction Group is operating out of a base in Huanuco and has already intercepted 45 kg of solvent, 65 kg of calcium oxide, and arrested 3 people. The Group also eradicated one hectare of opium poppy and received intelligence on other plantings in the area. Despite bad weather in Palma Pampa, DIRANDRO troops destroyed 14 cocaine-base laboratories and neutralized tons of precursor chemicals.

INSPECTING HELICOPTERS AND REPAIRING A C-130

¶19. (U) On March 7-11, an aviation maintenance assistance group from INL/A, U.S. Helicopter, Honeywell Engines, and McTurbine visited Pucallpa. DynCorp, the maintenance contractor, had reported that the UH-2s delivered in January and February 2006 had engine problems. Air Wing was concerned the warranty may have been voided, because of unauthorized maintenance procedures. The team instructed DynCorp on the correct maintenance procedures. The warranty on the new UH-2s had not been voided.

¶10. (U) With more CN Police graduating from the three academies east of the Andes, there is some concern about insufficient air lift support. Therefore, NAS will fund an inspection of the Peruvian Air Force C-130s that the FAP could make available to the CN effort. NAS is waiting for the final report, but the team said the C-130 fleet was in better shape than reported. Only one C-130 out of five is flyable, but there are sufficient spare parts to repair two more.

¶11. (SBU) NAS Guardians/Security Specialists have received intelligence reports from several sources claiming our helicopters may be targeted during the upcoming election period that runs until the end of May. Precautions are being taken and flight crews briefed.

PORTS: ION-SCANNERS SHARPLY IMPROVE CARGO INSPECTION

¶12. (U) Two ion-scan machines, used to detect trace amounts of chemicals, are now in operation at Port of Callao and Lima Airport. With one ion-scanner, 31 containers were inspected in one day with an average inspection rate of 15-20 containers daily. Without the scanner, Peruvian Customs was inspecting an average of 4 per day. The ion-scanner at Lima Airport should show a similar increase in air cargo and luggage inspection. GOP personnel are now being trained. A mobile, van-mounted x-ray machine is scheduled to arrive in Peru in April and will be used primarily at the airport, but it will also be available for inspections at terminals and warehouses.

¶13. (U) Two leased container scanners should arrive in Peru by the end of May. One will be used to inspect every container being exported through the northern port of Paita. Infrastructure improvement projects are underway in Paita to support additional personnel and operations in the port which previously did not inspect outbound cargo at all. The second scanner will be in Callao. NAS is working with Peruvian Customs to operate the scanner 24/7, which will be a first for Peruvian Customs.

¶14. (U) On March 30, Embassy officials met with representatives from the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Peruvian Coast Guard to discuss procedures for future incidents like the boarding of the Peruvian-registered fishing vessel Linda Rocio by U.S. forces on February 7 (Ref B).

ANTI-DRUG COALITIONS GETTING STRONG SUPPORT

¶15. (U) On March 21-25, Eduardo Hernandez, a representative from the U.S.-based NGO Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), provided technical assistance to our six Community Anti-Drug Coalition (CAC) teams. Hernandez and NAS staff observed CAC activities and meetings to evaluate their progress and offer recommendations. Preliminary results show that two CACs are progressing as planned with active participation and decision making by the community. Two others still need to have the CAC members complete their Logic Models and Strategic Plans. The last two CACs lack not only the Logic Models and Strategic Plans, but have not properly integrated the community into the CAC--members are still passive participants. All CAC teams were given specific recommendations with deadlines for completion. Despite some initial skepticism by the NGOs, people have responded enthusiastically to the CAC concept, expressing a desire to halt drug abuse in their communities and a will to provide their own resources for worthwhile projects. CADCA will provide a detailed report to INL/C/CJ.

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